

WITH THE KING FOR HIS WORK!

NO. 1400

(A slogan for Sunday school teachers).

**DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 1, 1877,
BY C.H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

*“These were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges:
there they dwelt with the king for his work.”
1 Chronicles 4:23.*

ALL labor is honorable. No man ever needs to be ashamed of an honest calling. Whether a potter or a gardener, or whatever else his occupation may be, the workman need never blush at the craft or toil by which he earns his honest wage. “In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread,” belongs to us all. The sluggard may well be ashamed of his sloth, but not the diligent man of his industry. It is quite certain that the Word of God does not disparage the most humble calling. I suppose that there is scarcely a trade or occupation which is not mentioned in sacred Scripture. The rough hand and the rugged face of the peasant are to be preferred before the dainty finger and the sleek form of the Pharisee.

And the election of Divine Grace has comprised men of all sorts—herdsman and fisherman, brick maker and tent maker—those who plowed the soil and those who plowed the sea. From all ranks and classes and conditions of men God has been pleased to call forth His own and He has loved them, none the less, because they have had to soil their hands with potter’s clay, or bend their backs to till the field. Wretched is the clown who sits in the shade while his comrades work in the sun! There is an honor, then, and a dignity, too, in humble honest toil. The Bible itself does not disdain to record the humble craftsman’s name.

To serve a *king* always was and still is deemed a thing to be desired. Those who do such duties claim some deference from their fellows. Work done well, however common, is accounted worthy of its wage, but work done for royalty generally has some special attraction to commend it. Such a man is privileged by appointment to be purveyor of this or that to Her Majesty, the Queen, and he takes good care to let us know it. It is published in his shop window. It is painted over his door. It is printed on his cards. It is pointed out on his invoices—he is, “By appointment to the Queen.” Royalty seems to dignify him.

But, Beloved, there is a King whom it is a *real* honor to serve—an honor which angels appreciate—which archangels delight in! That King is the King of kings and of Him we shall speak tonight—and of His service. Earthly kings have many servants and so has the King Eternal. I trust that many of us count it to be the very joy of our life that we call Jesus Christ our Lord and Master and that, to us, it is the highest pleasure to serve Him—to render to Him all that our strength can possibly yield because we feel that we are debtors to Him and are bound, from here on, in bonds of love to His Divine service forever and for evermore!

Looking at my text, I see three or four observations springing from it.

I. The first is this. Since we have mention, here, of potters and those that dwelt among the plants and hedges with the king for his work, we infer that **OUR KING HAS MANY KINDS OF SERVANTS**. Other kings have servants of different sorts and it would be the extreme of folly if one royal servant should say to another, “You are a nobody. You are of no use because you cannot perform the offices which *I* am called to discharge.” No brother must exult over his neighbor. He that is appointed to one office must fill it and he ought to sympathize with the friend who fulfils any other office, but he should never exalt himself above him. The king has many kinds of servants.

Look at any one of our kings and you find that they have soldiers. Until the halcyon days of peace shall arrive—may God speedily send them—I suppose there will always be standing armies and regiments of soldiers. Certainly, our great King, the King of kings, has many soldiers! It is their duty to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. They have to put on the panoply of God and to contend, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against

powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world—and against spiritual wickedness in high places! Full often they have to draw the sharp sword of controversy against doctrinal errors which might come in to destroy the city of our God.

Do not find fault with the Christian because he has soldierly qualities. There has been no time since Christ went to Heaven in which soldiers of Christ were not needed. Until the last enemy shall have laid down his weapons and infidelity and superstition shall be chased out of the world, we shall need these fighting men, who, with sword and shield, go forth to the conflict. They are your Master's servants. Pray for them. But a king has his watchmen, too, who do not go forth to fight, but stay at home and move about the city, especially by night. And do you know, I think the Lord's watchmen are mostly found among the sick. During the day, I suppose, there is little fear lest the incense of prayer should cease to rise up to the Throne of Heaven. But were we all in good health we might be all asleep and no prayer might be ascending.

From this island, at a certain hour of the night, if all were locked in slumber, there would be no petitions going up! And so it seems to me that as a part of heavenly ordinance, that every hour shall be sanctified by prayer—as well the dead of night as the blaze of noon—so He keeps some of His watchmen awake. They must pray. Their pains, their sleeplessness, keep them devout. They lift up their hearts to the Most High. And so with a blessed cordon of prayer the night watches are surrounded and the Lord keeps His flock safe from the wolf. I like to think of those who cannot come out to the assembly and cannot take part in any of the active exercises of evangelism, can, on their beds, keep watch for the Lord. “You that make mention of the Lord keep not silence and give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” These are His remembrancers—these consumptives, these sick folk—who in the gloomy hours of night keep awake and pour out their heart like water before the Lord!

Now, let not the soldier despise her that tarrys at home, for she divides the spoil. Let not Barak exult over feeble Jael who keeps the tent, for it may be that her prayer shall drive the nail through the adversary's brow and it shall not fall to Barak to be honored, but unto the humble stay-at-home. Oh, watch, you watchers! Plead much, you intercessors! You are the Lord's servants! Active and passive duties are, alike, valuable, and God accepts them! Let no one, therefore, exalt over another.

There are some of my Master's servants that are His heralds. You know that great kings have their trumpeters to go and proclaim for them. This is an honorable office and one to which I trust many a young man here will aspire—to be a herald of the Cross to publish salvation. Get up to the high mountains and lift up your voice! Lift them up. Lift them up with strength. Say unto the cities of Judah, “Behold your God!” And in every court there are scribes as well as heralds—the king's registrars that have to keep the chronicles and the records. So our great King has His scribes—the men of Isachar that can handle the pen—they whose hearts indite the good matter, for they speak of the things which they have made touching the king as the pen moves across the page.

Well, whether it is by the spoken utterance of the tongue, or by the silent but vigorous expression of facts, thoughts and feelings—we must be equally grateful for every opportunity to do anything for Jesus! And instead of beginning to question, “Which is the more valuable?” let each one seek to make his own department of the Master's service as complete and efficient as he can. Our King, too, has His musicians, as other monarchs have, who play before them to make a goodly sound upon an instrument. And I delight in those of my Master's servants who can dedicate musical talents to Him and give us, first of all, the sweet poetry with which we adore Him in Psalm and song. And after that the sweet tunes which help us with united voice to magnify the Lord.

Then there are sweet voices which help us of gruffer note in some way to keep harmony and so together to praise God. God be thanked for the Brothers and Sisters who have voices of melody! Let them consecrate it to their Lord and train it and use it always with discretion, not perhaps too loudly, and yet sometimes not too softly, either. Still, in a king's house they do not all sing. They cannot. There are some that make no melody. Servants are there in the royal palace that make no music unless it is with the brush and the broom, or whose music consists of the motion of their willing feet as they wait at the table, or as they go from chamber to chamber upon the royal errand.

Now, let not those who can sing His praises exalt themselves above those who can only perform the lowest service for the Lord. And let not those who are performing the real service of life think that there is something about their labor that is more acceptable than the singing of Jehovah's praise, for it is not so. Each one in his own order, all acting with

the right motive, all helping to take their part in the right spirit—all shall be equally acceptable with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Here is a great variety of servants. I cannot stop to go through them all, but you see the text mentions some of them called potters. I do not know but they may supply a very good example for Sunday school teachers. Let them not be ashamed of the metaphor, for I cheerfully put myself with them, as I hope the minister may have some claim to be classed among the King's potters. What do the potters do but take the clay while it is yet pliable and soft—and put it on the wheel and make the wheel revolve—and then with thumb and finger fashion the clay as it revolves before them, to make a vessel fit for royal use? Well, dear Sunday school teachers, if ever at any time the human mind is pliable, it is while a child is young! We would, all of us, find it hard to learn who never had studious habits till we reached the age of 30 years or upward!

Many a man is willing enough to be a student, but he has not the faculty for it. His skull has become set and hard and tight—and he cannot make his brain work as he could have done if he had begun earlier! But with the younger folk—oh what an opportunity there is to do a world with them! We cannot fashion them unless the hand of the Lord is with our hands—unless God makes their hearts soft—unless He puts them on the wheel for us! But if He does *that*, oh how a mother's hands can mold her boy! How a teacher's heart can mold the boy or girl committed to him or her and how throughout life the men and women of the future will bear about them the marks of the teachers of today! You are the King's potters! May He help you to do the work aright.

And then there is another class of workers mentioned, and those, I think, are like Sunday school teachers, too—those that dwell among plants and hedges. These were the king's *gardeners*. They dwelt in sheltered places—in enclosures that were protected by hedges to keep off the wind and so retain the heat. They lived in pleasant retreats where rare plants could grow. Now this is just what the Sunday school teacher should be. He tries to get the plants out from the wild waste and bring them into the—

*“Garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground.
The little spot enclosed by Grace,
Out of the world's wide wilderness.”*

He knows the Church is the garden of the Lord and he longs to plant many little slips in it. And I bless God that there are some teachers that my eyes rest upon who have planted many little slips that have been growing well. I thanked God when I saw them first take root! I bless the Lord when it is my business to water them as it is mine, now, and still that of their teachers. And I hope it will be the business of the teacher and the pastor, too, to gather much fruit from these little plants that we dwell among, that we plant, that we water and we tend.

Dear Friends, if you are engaged in this service, it is a right honorable one. The first man was a gardener and the Second Man—the Lord from Heaven—was supposed to be a gardener and the supposition was not untrue, for never was there such a garden as He planted! It is He who makes the wilderness to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Because of His own excellency and because of the plants that He has nurtured, the Church is a garden of unparalleled renown! Thus there are many servants of our great Master and I will only say this much more concerning them—how blessed it is to be included in the number! Oh, one does not mind what department he takes so long as he may but serve Christ! I have often prayed by myself a prayer like this—“Lord make me the doormat of the Church. Let everybody wipe his boots upon me. Let me bear the mud and the mire so long as my Master's temple may be kept clean by me.”

And I think any Christian man will wish to take the lowest and most menial place so that he may be accounted of by our Lord as among “His servants who serve Him.” The dishwashers in Christ's kitchen are more honorable than the counselors of an imperial court! They that have to do the worst and blackest work, if such there is to be done for the great Master, have a higher esteem in the judgment of perfect spirits than those that rule empires, conduct armies, but know not the fear of God!

II. I proceed to our second observation—ALL WHO LIVE WITH OUR KING MUST WORK. Read the text. “There were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges: there they dwelt with the king for his work.” They did not live on the king's bounty and dwell on the king's country estates to do nothing—they dwelt there for his work. I do not know whether all that call my Master, “Lord,” have caught this idea. I have thought that some of our

Church members imagine that the cause of Christ was a coach and that they were to ride in it—and that they would prefer the box seat—or else a very comfortable seat in the center.

Nor do they wish to be crowded by too many fellow travelers—they do not like to be pressed for room even in the pews—they would rather sit at ease, solace themselves with their own dignity and ride to Heaven in a quiet, respectable, comfortable sort of way. In fact, it would appear to me as if some of our friends imagined that when a man becomes a Believer he may repose on a silken couch and be carried to Glory in a palanquin, never needing to do anything afterwards, but simply to dream himself into everlasting happiness! They get a nice creed that drugs their conscience. They settle down in some snug corner where they defy anybody to disturb their security. They select a sound minister who runs on one line that he never leaves. They listen sometimes, not often too earnestly, to the plan and promises of the Gospel and when they have listened they say they are fed.

And if they ask about a minister, the question is, “Are you fed?” When it has got as far as the *feeding* their interest is exhausted. With the work of faith and the labor of love they never meddle. But let me assure you, as a matter of fact, that they that live with *our* King must work! They do not work that they may live with Him, but they work *because* they live with Him. Because His Grace has admitted them into His courts, therefore from that time they begin to work with all diligence. And why is this? What motive prompts them? Well, first, because *He* works. Jesus said, “My Father works to this day and I work.” The most wonderful Worker in the universe is God Himself—and His dear Son, when He was here—never had an idle hour. “He went about doing good.”

He began life as a carpenter and, I do not doubt, worked hard at it. Then as a Savior He surveyed on the outset His great charge, “to fulfill all righteousness.” With untiring zeal He pursued His arduous mission to the end and He finished His work. Until He said, “It is finished,” He did not relax His ardor or lay down His toil. Brothers and Sisters, we cannot dwell with the great working God and yet be sluggards! He will not put up with it! He will not have communion with us unless we are agreed with Him. “How can two walk together unless they are agreed?” Are you an active-minded person and have you had a servant that you could not stir or hasten or make her move with agility? Or have you had a workman who took one step today and another tomorrow?

Why, it gives you the fidgets! It makes your flesh creep! You do not know what to do. You cannot bear it. You take hold of the broom, or whatever else he is pretending to handle, and start using it—for you would sooner do the work yourself! Your patience is exhausted. Now, a glorious and active-minded God will not walk with sluggards! He cannot endure them. If you are to *dwell* with God you must be His *servant*. You must have something to do in His name. In whatever occupation it may be, you must lay yourself out, for His Glory is essential and imperative.

The next reason why those that dwell with Him must work is that His company always inspires us with the desire to do something for Him. You never spent a happy hour alone in private prayer holding privileged communion with God when you did not feel constrained to say, “Lord, show me what You would have me do.” You never enjoyed full assurance of faith without the question coming to you, “What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?” You cannot look at Him, bleeding on the Cross, pouring out His soul unto death for us, without feeling that the couch of inglorious ease would ill befit a faithful disciple’s favored fellowship with Him. You crave that your hands should find something to do and that your tongue should have something to say. You yearn for some opportunity of sounding forth His dear praises!

You may go where you will if you want to be idle, but you cannot go to the Cross and come away a sluggard. The nails of it prick us into sacred industry. They are the spurs of Christian duty. The agonies of our self-sacrificing Lord inspire us with such ardor that we feel we *must* serve Him and take it as a favor, not as a tax. It is a delight rather than a duty to lay ourselves out for Him! When you get into Christ’s courts, there is so much to do that you cannot help doing something! If you are a member of an active Church, you find yourself called upon this way and that way to spend and to be spent for Christ. In such a hive, drones are despicable! If you live where there are young converts, where there are tried Believers, where there are backsliders, where there are hopeful penitents—as these come under your notice you perceive that your Master’s house is full of service—you cannot refrain from taking some share in it and taking it eagerly, anxiously and cheerfully.

No, a true Christian cannot stroll outside his Master’s house without feeling calls to service! Can you walk these streets and have your ears assailed, as I grieve to say you must, with the filthiest language from working men—who

seem, to my mind, to have become more coarse in their talk the last 10 years than they used to be—can you, I ask, go down a street and have your blood curdle at the frequent oaths without feeling that you must be up and doing? Can you see these streets swarming with children and not come forward to help the Sunday school? Can you watch the multitudes of boys and girls streaming out of the Board School and not say to yourself “What is done with these on the Lord’s Day? Others must be hard at work with them, why am I not doing something?”

Everywhere, on all hands, work is suggested and especially by the activity of our adversaries. See how they compass sea and land to make one proselyte! See how the devil incessantly goes about seeking whom he may devour! He appears to have lost his eyelids! He never sleeps! He is intent upon devouring the souls of men and all the incidents and accidents we meet with say to us, “Are you Christians? Then bestir yourselves! Are you the King’s servants? Then be up and doing, for there are thousands of things that must be done at once, if done at all, without waiting to discuss the best way of doing them.” At any rate, of this thing you may be quite certain—the professor of true religion who is negligent in his Lord’s service must and will lose the comforts of his Lord’s Presence.

I speak not, of course, of those who are sick, infirm, or helpless—for as I have already explained—by their patience and resignation and intercession they are exercising a very important part of the work of the Lord’s Kingdom. But I speak of those of you who might be actively engaged and I regard it as a rule without exception that sluggish Christians become uncomfortable. When you meet with a Brother or Sister in Christ who is always grievous, complaining of doubts and fears, sighing and groaning, crying and moaning over an experience that puzzles, rather than profits, you need not ask many questions, for you may safely interpret all the symptoms. That person does not teach in the Sunday school. That person does not go out preaching in the villages. That person is very likely doing nothing!

An earnest worker may be occasionally beset with temptations, but he will not be perpetually bewildered with these throes of anxiety. If that is the regular, habitual condition of the man, it looks as if he had a need of something to do. There are many flies, moths, spiders and cobwebs in the chambers of the lazy! Surely they would be brushed away if there were more activity for Christ. I think any minister will tell you it is the people who do nothing, themselves, in a Church that find fault with those who do the work. With great discernment they can always discover flaws in the policy and practice of the earnest Brothers and Sisters who take the pains and do the drudge of office. Bless their hearts, why do they not do it better themselves? No, not they! They seem to think that their department in the sacred household is to find fault with their Master’s servants.

Now I have looked all over His house, for I have been in it for years, occupying an official position. I have pried over my Master’s books and I have been into His record office, but do you know I have not found anywhere that He has ever issued appointments to any ladies or gentlemen to be the supervisors and censurers of His servants? I believe they act without commission and that they will probably go without any wages. Or if all service rendered meets with an equitable retribution and the wages of sin is death—their carping will bring them no comfort and their reviling will be requited with bitter remorse. O Brothers and Sisters, there is no excuse for your culpable inactivity! Christ walks at a quick pace. If you want to walk with Him you must not loiter! He is no friend to the sluggard!

I cannot always tell you where fellowship with Him may be found, but I can tell you where it can *never* be enjoyed. He is not where idlers lounge and congregate to gossip with gibe and jeer, with slur and sneer, railing at the very men whose conduct proves their conscience so pure that they would blight their own interests to bless the Lord’s cause. He is with His people who are diligently devoted to His service and seek Him for strength to do that service well. Those that live with our King must work.

III. Now, thirdly, **THOSE THAT WORK FOR OUR KING OUGHT TO LIVE WITH HIM.** That is the other side of the coin, for these potters and these gardeners *dwelt* with the king for his work. I offer to the Sunday school teachers of the south side of London a slogan which may last them for life—“With the King for His work!” Put that up, now, over your mantelpieces. “With the King for His work!” Work, by all means, because you are with the King! But get with the King, by all means, because you want to do His work!

Oh, how important it is that every good servant of our heavenly Master should be with Him! Why? Do you ask me, why? Because you cannot know His will if you do not live with Him! He that lives with Christ gets his orders every day and oftentimes from moment to moment! He gets guidance from his great Lord’s eyes. He says, “You shall guide me with Your eyes.” You know how a servant in the house watches her mistress. The mistress does not always need to speak.

Perhaps it is at a dinner. There is a number of guests. She does not keep calling, “Mary,” and instructing her in measured sentences to attend to the various requirements, but by a simple movement of her head, or a quiet glance of her eyes, Mary can understand all her mistress wishes.

Now, those who live with Jesus Christ have a sort of secret alphabet between themselves and Him. Oftentimes when a Christian man does the right thing, you read as a story, or as an anecdote that enlivens a book, how strangely wise he was—how he dropped the right word at the fitting moment—how he had a knack of giving the right answer to one who wrongly assailed him. Do you know why he had that knack? He lived with his Master, so he knew what you knew not! He knew the meaning of his Master’s eyes and it guided him! Oh, I believe if Sunday school teachers and ministers live with their Lord they will be made wise to win souls! Oftentimes things they never thought of saying, they will say *exactly* at the right time to the right persons—and so surprising will it be to the persons addressed that they will almost think that you must have been told about them! Keep close to your Master and then you will know your Master’s will.

Why should workers live with the Lord but that they may gather strength? Every hour of communion with Christ is an hour of increased vigor. In the old fable, when Hercules fought with the giant, he could not kill him. He flung him down with all his might and Hercules could fling a fellow about. He thought he had dashed him to pieces, but every time he got up, he was stronger than before! So down he flung him again. “Surely,” he thought, “if I have destroyed the hydra and the lion, I can kill this *man*—this giant.” But up the giant sprang again because the old fable said that the *earth* was his mother—and every time that he fell, he touched his mother and got new life from her.

So every time a Christian falls on his knees and draws near to his God, he gets a touch of his great Father and he gets new strength! When the devil throws a Christian to his knees—throws him down with such force, too, that he thinks, “I will crush him,” he gets up again and is stronger than the devil! Over he goes again. He trips him up, flings him down, but every time the Christian falls to praying, he rises from before the Mercy Seat like a giant against the foe! Oh, then, dwell near the Lord, for that is the source of your strength as well as your knowledge! Why should workers dwell with the King? Surely it is to keep up their enthusiasm! Humanly speaking, the very soul of Christianity is enthusiasm. Cold religion—well, there are some cold things that give one a chill to think of. Cold *religion*? It is the most ghastly spectacle on which a pure and fervent heart can look! Cold religion? Ugh! It is nauseous!

There is only one thing worse and that is a cool, listless profession, for Jesus Christ tells us that the lukewarm made Him outright sick. To the Laodicean said the faithful and true Witness, “I would you were cold or hot.” “So then because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spit you out of My mouth.” Let your faith be at furnace heat! Religion cannot long be lukewarm—it will either die out or it will kindle and set you all on fire. If it consume a man, then it only reaches the heat at which Jesus Christ lived. Somebody has very properly said, “Blood heat is the healthy heat for a Christian’s soul.” So it is. But what is the blood heat? The heat of our great atoning Sacrifice—the blood heat of our blessed Redeemer when He sweat great drops of blood and gave Himself for us! Would God we were filled with such flaming zeal. But ah, you never can attain unto it unless you live with Him! The world is cold and ice-bound and the Church is chill and pierced with the east wind. Would you get into the tropics where luxuriant fruits grow? Live near Christ! Then you will become enthusiastic and pursue your work with a fervor all Divine!

We must live with our King, too, that we may be inspired with courage. I suppose some teachers are timid. I know some preachers are haunted with strange fears. The way to quicken courage is to look the King in the face. When you see how patiently He endured reproach and how resolutely He proceeded with His ministry of love, even to die for us, you will not be afraid of the faces of men, nor will you shrink from duty because nervous friends warn you of danger. And you need to live with the King if you would cultivate the soft Grace of patience. Sunday school work is very trying. It often vexes the soul and you get weary. But when you go and look at Him and see how He failed not, neither was discouraged, but went through with the work which He undertook till He could say, “It is finished,” you will chide your soul for all its futile excitement and feverish unrest. By your patience and perseverance you will approve yourselves as children of God and followers of Christ.

In short, dear Friends, I do not know that a person can do anything for our Lord Jesus Christ aright without living in communion with Him. I am persuaded that Martha got into trouble about that dinner of hers because she did not mix with her serving, the sitting at the Savior’s feet with Mary. I am sure that we can attempt too much and accomplish too little, for we can apparently do a great deal, but because we have not had power with God, very little may come of it.

Steeped seed is the best for Sunday school teachers. It is always well to take care that the good seed you bring to the little plots—your children’s little minds—has been soaked the night before in earnest prayer. It is wonderful how quickly it sprouts and what a deal of vitality it manifests if you soak it! The dry seed—dry teaching without any praying—without any communion with God may be productive, but it is a long time in coming up and yielding a reward for your labor.

Believe me, my dear Brothers and Sisters, that to abide near to Jesus is the very life of Christian service! I would have you feel and speak like this, “I am engaged in the service of the King. Fifty little children I have under my charge—all infants—and I am trying to teach them something, but they are all full of fun and I cannot get anything into their little heads! But it would never do to think of giving it up because I am doing it for Jesus! I would not do it for anybody else.” Or, “I have got half-a-dozen unruly boys in the ragged school. I would not undertake the work of this school for the biggest salary that could be offered me, but I can do it for Jesus Christ and I will do it for the love and gratitude I feel to Him. In fact, I am happy in doing it because I know that He is looking on—that He sees all that I do—if nobody else appreciates my service, He does. And He will accept me and I know with His help some blessed result will come of it, so I will tax all my energies to the task as the workman wakes up when there is a king watching.

With what care and diligence he will exercise his highest skill! So let your task be performed with all your might, for if done for Him it ought to be done well. Nothing should be slurred over in a slovenly fashion that is done for Jesus! This thought, that I am with the King, is animating and helpful to me. I can assure you beyond any description of its influence that I can convey to you.

IV. Now to our last point, upon which only a few words. That which should encourage us to *live* in any place is that we may work for the King in it. And that which should encourage us to any *work* is that WE ARE WORKING FOR THE KING. “These were the potters that dwelt among plants and hedges: there they dwelt with the king for his work.” In any place where you dwell you can dwell with the King! These pottery men and gardeners were on the king’s estate. You need not live next door to a church. You need not live with a pious family to have God with you. Oh, bless the Lord, I have met with my Lord and Master by the bedsides of the sick in Kent street many a time! My friend Mr. McCree has met the Lord many a time in a cellar in St. Giles’s—and He is often to be found in Bethnalgreen and Shoreditch—in the very worst habitations that ever human beings dwelt in!

Dwell wherever you may—on the land or on the sea, in the hospital or in the workhouse—you may still dwell there with the King! He does not need any carpets. He does not care about rich furniture. In fact, He does not often come where the floors are covered with Oriental carpets. I think the scarcest place for Christ is with the rich—they seldom have much to say about Him. I speak not of them all, but of very many. If for my part I need half an hour’s real talk about Jesus Christ, I must visit the poor man. I do not know how others find it, but it is so, it is sadly so in my experience. Well, wherever you dwell and whatever your rank, you may have the Lord dwelling with you and this ought to encourage you to dwell anywhere if you can serve the Lord.

I always find that when men are converted, if they live in a very bad neighborhood, they try and get out of it. That is right enough. I think if I were living in some neighborhoods, the sooner I could change my residence the better pleased I should be. At the same time, in a bad locality a good man is a great gift. Where is a bright lamp more needed than down in a dark alley? Where is the pure light most needed? Is it not among the depraved and profligate? Sometimes I almost fear that the repugnance with which Christian people fly away from a bad district is a misfortune for the population, especially for the young who are left behind. Of the sympathy that might be felt and the good that might be done by their being there, the inhabitants are henceforth bereft.

My dear Brother, if you are placed in the very midst of ribald wickedness, an opportunity to serve the Lord where Satan’s seat is might induce you to stop there awhile with the self-denial of a missionary among the heathen. It may be that it is cowardly to run away. Rather should it become you to say, “I am put into this fort in the midst of the enemy and I mean to stay—my fixed purpose is to hoist the flag of Christ on the top of it! Instead of deserting the post, I will strive incessantly to win souls for Him.” At any rate, if you are compelled to live in neighborhoods that you do not like, it ought to be some comfort to you that the King will live there with you and that perhaps He has placed you there to try your faith, to honor His name and to bless the outcasts.

Go, Beloved, wherever you reside and realize that your abode is a station you are appointed to occupy for His work. Let the nurse girl in the family, with the little ones about her, live for Christ and lose no opportunity of letting her light shine. Let the artisan, thrown into the large workshop where there are none like himself, be encouraged that he is put there for the King's work. The tradesman, dealing with many who like to have a word across the counter, should order his conversation for the glory of Christ. The merchant who will be sure to make many friends in business, should not forget his Lord, but bear a faithful testimony as often as he can. The employer of many hands should take care that he seeks the welfare of their *souls* and consider by what manifold agencies he can promote the King's work. You that have leisure, dear Friends, should feel that your spare time is a sacred trust never to be squandered, but to be consecrated always to the King's work.

You that have talents should feel the same imperative obligation—yes, and especially you that have only one talent! It was the man of one talent that buried it. So it commonly is. You have not much talent, you think—nothing brilliant. Then the temptation is to go and bury your bit of bronze because you cannot display any glittering gold. Your conscious weakness produces a wicked conceit. Do not withhold your mite from the treasury because you have not a million to contribute. Still live with the King for His work.

Doubtless I have been addressing some who have never served the King, who do not know Him, who do not love Him. I am not going to ask you to work for Him. No, no. My Lord needs none to work for Him who do not believe in Him. "Come and trust Him." Our soldier friends over there, a sprinkling of whom I am pleased to see and proud to salute, know how to enlist in the service. How does a man first become a soldier? Well, he receives a shilling. He *receives* and then he is a soldier. He that will receive Christ is made a soldier of Christ! It is *receiving* you have to begin with. And after you have received Christ, then you shall go forth and serve Him! Put out an empty hand and receive Christ into it by a little faith and then go and serve Him—and may the Lord bless you from that time and forever. Amen.

Adapted from *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.